

November 19, 2019

Senator Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Charles Schumer
Democratic Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Senate HELP Committee
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate HELP Committee
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Chairman Alexander, and Ranking Member Murray:

As former Commissioners of the Food and Drug Administration, we are writing to provide our perspectives on the Committee's consideration of the nomination of Dr. Stephen Hahn as Commissioner of Food and Drugs.

We appreciate the Committee's prompt consideration of Dr. Hahn's nomination. As four of us previously wrote to the President and Secretary Azar in urging a timely nomination, the FDA urgently needs a well-qualified permanent Commissioner. The FDA regulates up to one-quarter of the US consumer economy, including potentially life-saving therapies and most of the nation's food supply, and is constantly under pressure to adapt to changes in science and public health threats. The agency has a dedicated and talented professional staff to carry out its mission, but a permanent Commissioner provides the support needed to enable that work. The absence of a confirmed Commissioner complicates their ability to undertake and sustain the FDA's continuously evolving role in protecting and promoting the health of Americans.

We believe Dr. Hahn has the experience and commitment to public health and public service needed to provide this leadership. He has extensive public-sector experience in clinical research, serving at the National Cancer Institute for seven years, including as an officer in the US Public Health Service. He also has significant expertise in the conduct of the biomedical research that FDA regulates, with more than 200 peer-reviewed publications and multiple patents from his career in academic medicine. Finally, he has extensive executive leadership experience at both the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and at the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center.

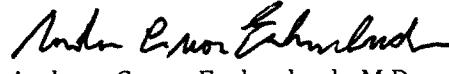
This is a critical time for public health and for leadership on the many challenging issues and opportunities facing the FDA and the nation. We hope that Dr. Hahn will be able to bring his clinical expertise, leadership experience, and commitment to public service and science to the FDA as soon as possible.

Sincerely,


Robert M. Califf, M.D., MACC
FDA Commissioner 2016-2017


Mark McClellan, M.D., Ph.D.
FDA Commissioner, 2002-2004


Scott Gottlieb, M.D.
FDA Commissioner 2017-2019


Andrew C. von Eschenbach, M.D.
FDA Commissioner 2006-2009


Margaret Hamburg, M.D.
FDA Commissioner 2009-2015